

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 MED-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PRS-01 AID-05 IGA-02 DODE-00 /035 W
----- 083524 /43

R 211330Z DEC 76
FM AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0516
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL PORT SAID VIA POUCH

UNCLAS ALEXANDRIA 0771

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SWEL, EG
SUBJECT: MAJOR WATER CUT-OFF IN ALEXANDRIA

1. WATER SUPPLY FOR ENTIRE EASTERN SECTOR OF ALEXANDRIA, FROM SIDI GABER TO ABU KEIR, WAS CUT OFF FRIDAY, DECEMBER 17, WHEN ONE OF THREE MAIN CONDUITS AT SIOUF PUMPING STATION BURST, FLOODING PUMP ROOM AND SHORTING ALL RPT ALL PUMP MOTORS. AREA CONTAINS BULK OF ALEXANDRIA'S MIDDLE AND UPPER CLASS RESIDENCES, INCLUDING GOVERNOR'S AND LARGE PART OF CONSULAR CORPS AND EUROPEAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

2. ORIGINAL WORD WAS PUMPING, ON LIMITED SCALE, COULD RESUME IN FOUR DAYS, BUT NEWSPAPERS OF DECEMBER 21 SAID IT MIGHT TAKE TWO OR THREE WEEKS. CONGEN MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST CALLED ON WATER AUTHORITY MIDDAY DECEMBER 21 AND WAS TAKEN TO VISIT SIOUF PUMPING STATION. HE FOUND ALL FLOODING HAS BEEN DRAINED AWAY BY FIRE DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT AND TWELVE AFFECTED PUMPING MOTORS DISMANTLED AND BEING CLEANED AND DRIED. SHORTED ROTORS ARE BEING STRIPPED AND REWOUND, AND ENGINEER IN CHARGE WAS CONFIDENT FIRST PUMP WOULD BE OPERATIVE BY MIDNIGHT.

3. WHETHER MINIMAL WATER PRESSURE WILL BE RESTORED TO ENTIRE AREA AFFECTED OR PARTIAL PRESSURE TO SMALLER AREA NOT ASCERTAINED,
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ALTHOUGH ONE RUMOR INDICATES THAT AREA AROUND GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE AND UPPER CLASS RESIDENCES WILL BENEFIT MOST (RHIP) AND SERVICE TO OUTLYING LESSER SUBURBS WILL BE RESTORED ONLY AS MORE PUMPS COME BACK ON LINE.

4. ACCORDING TO CONGEN MEDICAL ADVISER AND TO INFECTIOUS

DISEASES HOSPITAL DIRECTOR, THERE IS NO RPT NO PRESENT HEALTH HAZARD, EVEN IN LOWER CLASS NEIGHBORHOODS. MAIN PROBLEM IN SUCH QUARTERS AS SIDI BISHR, IS LACK OF BREAD, STAPLE IN THEIR DIET, WHICH CANNOT BE MADE WITHOUT WATER.

5. MAJOR PROBLEM FOR CONGEN PERSONNEL AND OTHER AMERICANS IS INCONVENIENCE OF OBTAINING WATER FROM UNAFFECTED PART OF CITY, ENOUGH ONLY FOR ESSENTIAL COOKING AND MINIMUM WASHING/SHAVING USES. SOME WITH GARDEN IRRIGATION STILL LINKED TO NILE WATER SOURCES FROM MOHAMMEDIA CANAL CAN UTILIZE THAT FOR TOILET FLUSHING AND OTHER ROUGH CLEANING USES, BUT MEDICAL ADVISER WARNS WE MUST USE UTMOST CARE SINCE IT CAN BE HIGHLY POLLUTED. WE ARE BUYING BOTTLED WATER FOR ALL PERSONNEL FOR DRINKING.
VALERGA

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ALEXAN00771
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760468-0466
From: ALEXANDRIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761222/aaaaasua.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2004 by chengls>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR WATER CUT-OFF IN ALEXANDRIA
TAGS: SWEL, EG, ALEXANDRIA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006